



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
 2570 Dole St. Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-2396

HILO AREA/EAST COAST OF THE ISLAND OF HAWAII

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REPORTING STRANDED SEA TURTLES AND THE VIOLATION OF LAWS PROTECTING HAWAIIAN SEA TURTLES

A stranded sea turtle is defined as any ocean turtle found dead, injured, sick, tumored, or otherwise abnormal and sometimes even abnormal in appearance and out of the water, usually along the shoreline. The turtle may also be in very shallow water close to shore.

To report a stranded sea turtle and facilitate a response, please **page**:

327-7780 (use this number first)

969-5067

327-7795

(University of Hawaii- Hilo Marine Option Program students in partnership with NMFS.)

For suspected law enforcement violations, such as killing, harming, or harassing a turtle please call:

974-6208 or, after hours call 643- DLNR (643-3567)

Hilo DOCARE

State of Hawaii

800-853-1964

Honolulu: 808-541-2727

Law Enforcement Branch

National Marine Fisheries Service

For other areas of the Big Island, please call:

Strandings- **881-4200 (Honokohau to Hawi)**

Enforcement- **327-4961 (Kona); 887-6196 (Kamuela) or after hours 643- DLNR (643-3567)**

For more information, please call:

NMFS Marine Turtle Research Program **808-983-5730 (Oahu)**

Important points to keep in mind:

- Sea turtles are listed and protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and wildlife laws of the State of Hawaii. All sea turtles, both dead and alive, are legally protected.
- These instructions apply exclusively to sea turtles. Please do not call 911 or any other private or government organizations.
- Due to the considerable travel distances that may be involved, and the possibility of other turtle strandings occurring at the same time, a delay in response of three hours or more may occur. Please be patient. There is no harm whatsoever for a sea turtle to be out of the water for many hours, provided it is not in direct hot sunlight. In fact, sea turtles strand because they want to and need to be out of the ocean.
- Callers should be prepared to tell exactly where the turtle is located, whether it appears to be dead or alive, and the size of the animal (estimated weight or length of shell - can one person lift it, or will two or more persons be needed?). Due to safety considerations, personnel may not travel at night to isolated unfamiliar areas.
- If the turtle returns to the water before someone arrives, this is not necessarily bad. Some turtles, even those with tumors, want to rest ashore for a period of time and they may do this regularly (called basking).
- DOCARE is a point of contact to facilitate a response. DOCARE Officers do not normally pick up stranded turtles, unless there is a law enforcement violation.